



SOLDIER SETTLEMENT OF CANADA

VANCOUVER, B.C., June 2, 1942.

G. Murchison, Esq., Director of Soldier Settlement, Ottawa

Personal and Confidential Via Air Mail

Dear Mr. Murchison,

Appraisal of Japanese Lands

I spent last Thursday and Friday in the country again acquainting myself with the greater detail in the ground in regard to the Japanese lands, and the localities in which these properties are located. I also had a full discussion with both appraisal teams. I took the boys who are working out of Abbotsford over Matsqui Municipality and showed them the majority of the Japanese properties which they have to appraise. Mr. Ramsay is not familiar with Matsqui, and they all wanted the general background which they considered I could give them.

I think our men are doing a good job. Irrespective of whether or not their yardstick of values is correct, I feel they are attempting to appraise one property fairly with another, and if it should come to the purchase of these lands, and it is necessary to increase the values, this could be done largely on a percentage basis. The whole problem is full of contradictions of various kinds, but I have told the appraisers not to worry as this is bound to crop up in any appraisal job of such magnitude.

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As far as I can ascertain the Japanese planted probably over one hundred acres in hops in the last two or three years, and the kiln for curing hops which was built in the Mission apparently was financed by the Japanese. Most of these hops are in blocks of not more than one or two acres on the individual farms. When I found out that the Haas Hop Company at Sardis was going to work most of these small hopyards I was at a loss to understand how they could be interested in these small acreages as their own yards in Chilliwack are in three or four blocks, all comparatively close together. I think that they now have over 800 acres in hops. I discovered that most of their hops the Japanese have are cluster

Letter from Barnet to Gordon Murchison,
June 2 1942, RG 38, V 403, file v-8-10,
part 1, Library and Archives Canada

LESSON 3 SOURCE 3.14 MEMO: BARNETT TO MURCHISON

hops, and this is the variety the Haas Company is short on.

I hear that Mr. Shimek, or his Company, have an advance in the neighbourhood of \$150,000 from the bank, and a number of Japanese have received fairly substantial cash payments from this source. Probably for the first time in history the Japanese have received equal payment for a crop in advance at a figure equal to what they would have made net if they had handled the crop themselves. A number of people with whom Shimek has arranged leases are Mennonites of fairly recent vintage from the Prairies m. Already some of them are wondering where they are going to get any money out of these crops for themselves at \$100 sore rent.

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I see no immediate serious problems cropping up in Soldier Settlement with all our staff working on this Japanese problem. I think on the whole the boys are reasonably content on the job. I authorized them to go home over the 24th of May at Government expense as I felt the cost to the Government would be less than keeping them in the hotels, and they would feel better for getting home to see their families. I am satisfied it was the right course to take as I see from the appraisals received yesterday that a number of them who stayed at the hotels worked over the weekend. I am going to suggest that those who are away from home work this weekend, and next Monday, and this time to a longer holiday on the first of July.

I hope that at the sittings of your Committee the Prairie members can appreciate that Canada produces other products beside wheat and some livestock. Some of the Japanese greenhouse men are producing more off five acres than some of the Prairie farmers are off 3000 acres.

Yours very truly,
(Signed)
District Superintendent
ITB:B